

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

COMPLETE LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 : (Canceled)

Claim 2 : (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1, wherein~~

A method of manufacturing an object, comprising the steps of:

- a) forming a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
- b) placing the carrier on a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;
- c) positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- d) positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;
- e) sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;
- f) removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier after sealing; and
- g) each positioning step ~~is being~~ performed by feeding the lower and upper films from respective film rolls through the sealing station.

Claim 3 : (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1, and the steps of~~ A method of manufacturing an object, comprising the steps of:

- a) forming a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;

- b) placing the carrier on a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;
- c) positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- d) positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;
- e) sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;
- f) removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier after sealing;
- g) coating the lower and upper films with fusible coatings; and wherein
- h) the positioning steps are being performed by feeding the lower and upper films with the fusible coatings facing each other.

Claim 4 : (Canceled)

Claim 5 : (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1; and the step of~~ A method of manufacturing an object, comprising the steps of:

- a) forming a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
- b) placing the carrier on a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;
- c) positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- d) positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;

e) sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;

f) removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier after sealing; and

g) adhering the lower film to the carrier simultaneously with performing the sealing step to maintain a correct positional relationship between the sealed film assembly and the carrier during manufacture.

Claim 6 : (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1; and the step of~~ A method of manufacturing an object, comprising the steps of:

a) forming a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;

b) placing the carrier on a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;

c) positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;

d) positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;

e) sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;

f) removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier after sealing; and

g) laminating the lower film to the carrier prior to performing the sealing step.

Claim 7 : (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1; and the step of~~ A method of manufacturing an object, comprising the steps of:

- a) forming a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
- b) placing the carrier on a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;
- c) positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- d) positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;
- e) sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;
- f) removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier after sealing; and
- g) cutting the films while the films are positioned on the carrier.

Claim 8 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the cutting step is performed simultaneously with the sealing step.

Claim 9 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the cutting step is performed subsequently to the sealing step.

Claim 10 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 7, wherein the overlapping portions are sealed boundary areas extending at least partly along a periphery of the object to be manufactured, and wherein the cutting step is performed at least partly within the boundary areas.

Claim 11 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the carrier has peripheral edges, and wherein the boundary areas are cut along a cutting line located

at a spacing from the peripheral edges; and the step of removing the lower and upper films from the spacing.

Claim 12 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the carrier has peripheral edges, and wherein the boundary areas are cut along a cutting line located at a spacing from the peripheral edges; and the step of leaving the lower and upper films in the spacing.

Claim 13 : (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2; and the step of cutting the carrier subsequently to the sealing step to form a sheet on which the sealed film assembly is supported.

Claim 14 : (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 1~~ claim 7; and the step of printing on the sealed film assembly in registration with the carrier.

Claim 15 : (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1; and the step of~~ A method of manufacturing an object, comprising the steps of:

- a) forming a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
- b) placing the carrier on a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;
- c) positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- d) positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;
- e) sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;

- f) removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier after sealing; and
- g) inserting an inflation valve in the sealed film assembly.

Claim 16 : (Currently Amended) ~~The method of claim 1~~ claim 15,

wherein the lower and upper films overlap and contact each other over a surface area; and the step of adhering the lower and upper films together over the entire surface area of contact.

Claim 17 : (Canceled)

Claim 18 : (Currently Amended) ~~The arrangement of claim 17;~~

~~and~~ An arrangement for manufacturing an object, comprising:

- a) means for supplying a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
- b) a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;
- c) means for positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- d) means for positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;
- e) means for sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;
- f) means for removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier; and
- g) means for adhering the lower film to the carrier simultaneously with operation of the sealing means to maintain a correct positional relationship between the sealed film assembly and the carrier during manufacture.

Claim 19 : (Currently Amended) ~~The arrangement of claim 17;~~

~~and~~ An arrangement for manufacturing an object, comprising:

- a) means for supplying a support carrier of a shape-retaining material;
- b) a conveyor for conveying the carrier past a sealing workstation;
- c) means for positioning a lower film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the carrier;
- d) means for positioning an upper film of a flexible material more flexible than the material of the carrier, on and in overlapping relationship with the lower film;
- e) means for sealing overlapping portions of the films together at the sealing workstation to form a sealed film assembly while the films are positioned on the carrier;
- f) means for removing the sealed film assembly from the carrier; and
- g) means for cutting the films while the films are positioned on the carrier.

Claim 20 : (Currently Amended) The arrangement of ~~claim 17~~ claim 19; and means for printing on the sealed film assembly in registration with the carrier.

Claim 21 : (Canceled)

Claim 22 : (Canceled)

Claim 23 : (Canceled)